



**BOWERS GIFFORD AND NORTH BENFLEET
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 14th DECEMBER 2022 AT 7.30 PM.**

PRESENT:

Councillors: B. Foster: S. Moore: S. Pegg

Ward Councillor/s: None

Parish Council Clerk/RFO: Mrs Christine Barlow

Public attendance: 9

70/22 Apologies for absence: Councillor Colin Morris: Councillor Craig Rimmer (Ward Councillor Pitsea South East) (Councillor Rimmer was attending a Planning Committee Meeting)

Councillor Foster welcomed all to the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance on such a cold and miserable night.

71/22 Declarations of Member's interest: To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests, other pecuniary interests or non-pecuniary interests from members relating to any agenda items.

None declared.

72/22 Minutes of Parish Council meetings: To approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 26TH October 2022 and Chair to sign.

The Parish Council Meeting on 25th November had been cancelled as inquorate due to two Councillors being unable to attend due to illness and the minutes of the meeting held on 26th October 2022 still had to be approved. Councillors AGREED the minutes as presented were an accurate record of the meeting and Councillor Foster, Chairman, signed to confirm.

73/22 Public Forum: Public participation session to provide residents with the opportunity to raise questions of a general nature. (The time allowed for this item is 15 minutes)

(i) A resident asked if Rock Salt would be available this year for the community to spread in areas not covered by Council gritters. The Parish Clerk advised the salt had been arranged via Essex County Council but the contractors had not yet delivered the salt to the Green Barn as arranged. The Parish Clerk had been chasing the delivery for it to be received prior to her going on holiday.

(ii) Councillor Pegg asked if the road sign adjacent to Primrose Cottage in Elm Road could be replaced as it had been damaged. **Action:** The Parish Clerk to contact Basildon Council and make the request.

(iii) A resident raised concerns regarding Sadlers Farm and the area adjacent to the roundabout which was being used for the storage and movement of containers. The meeting was advised that the Parish Council had raised the same issue with Basildon Council and the current illegal use of the site for the storage of containers and for the movement of lorries. Basildon Council Planning Enforcement advised they were dealing with the matter raised by the Parish Council.

(iv) A resident advised that flooding in Bowers Court Drive had diminished due to a drain which was covered by earth being unblocked on the highway verge adjacent to Sadlers Park Traveller site. The discovery had been made by Balfour Beatty whilst undertaking work on the bridge.

(v) The unkept condition of the exterior of Exchange House was raised. It was noted that the verge was the responsibility of Essex County Council and although Basildon Council had made approaches to Essex County Council and the Parish Council had also raised their concerns with Essex County Council very little action had been taken by Essex County Council to resolve the situation. **Action:** The Parish Clerk would contact Essex County Council again

More work is scheduled to take place in 2023 to carry out much needed repairs in Church Road Subway. The repairs will include (i) painting all internal surfaces (ii) reinstating the fire damaged internal surfaces of the subway (iii) replacing the damaged lighting system and (iv) measures to prevent vehicle ingress at each end of the subway. Access to old Church Road and the subway will be closed for several weeks and a diversion will be in place.

74/22 Ward/County Councillor update: Time is set aside for Borough/County Councillors to address the meeting.

Ward and County Councillors were not in attendance.

75/22 Parish Clerks Report: To provide Councillors with an update on business since the previous meeting.

Item 61/22(i): The proposed walk on 4th December 2022 reported by Councillor Rimmer at the meeting on 26th October to review the condition of footpaths in the village and was to have included Lee Scott, ECC Cabinet Member for Highways, did not take place and was to be rearranged.

Item 61/22(iii): Illegal building on Cranfield Park Traveller Site had again been reported. As Councillor Rimmer was on holiday no further update was available.

Item 61/22(v): Graffiti removal on village bus stops still outstanding.

Item 61/22(vii): Refusal of planning application: Both residents had resubmitted their planning applications and outcome of submissions was pending.

Item 63/22(i): (i) Funding for additional resources for Handy Person Service had been unsuccessful. (ii) An application for a small grant to help fund the CCTV equipment in Westlake Park as a digital system had however been successful.

A resident stated that the nylon ties around the building materials on the verge of the new property on the corner of Pound Lane and William Road and asked if this could be brought to the attention of the owner.

A newsletter was imminently due to be distributed to households in the Village and there were several articles included which dealt with speeding, parking and the need for more Parish Councillors.

Parish Councillors had spoken to two residents after the Parish Council meeting on 26th October and discussed their Planning Applications which had been refused. Subsequent to the discussions and making the changes to their original applications the two residents had resubmitted their applications for approval.

The new play equipment in Westlake Park was to be installed in early February. The Parish Clerk had met with the contractors and Basildon Council Officers and confirmed the location within the Park to cause the least disruption to residents. The equipment will consist of a Zip Wire, a rope Climber and a junior trampoline. The old Net Swing Seat, which had been vandalised, would be replaced.

A resident asked if a cover could be installed over the slide to keep it dry as rainwater laid on the equipment making it very wet. **Action:** To consider the request when installing new equipment.

The Parish Council had sent a response to the Boundary Commission regarding the Commission's proposals to join Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet with Castle Point Constituency for Parliamentary Elections instead of it remaining with East Thurrock and South Basildon as it had done for many years. This would mean the Parish would have a different MP to other parts of the Basildon Constituency. The Parish Council had also written to Stephen Metcalfe MP and Ward Councillors to air their concerns about the changes. It was considered that the Boundary Commission consultation was not well publicised as very few people in the Parish had responded to it or were aware of its existence.

76/22 Finance Report:

(i) To receive a summary of the Parish Council's current financial position

Chris Barlow, the Responsible Finance Officer, provided a summary of income and expenditure for information.

	£
Balance at Bank 26 th October 2022	104,969.52
Balance at Bank 2 nd December 2022	87,723.01
Expenditure:	17, 666.51
Income:	420.00

Expenditure:

BT RCCE Annual Subscription	72.60
BT EALC Clerks First Aid Training	180.00
BT Handy Person Service Wages (OCT)	224.00
BT PKF LittleJohn (External Audit)	360.00
BT Clerks Net Salary (Oct) Plus Tel/BB/Office Use	774.00
BT Gallagher – annual Insurance Premium	976.26
BT RCOH – O’Neill Homer – Consultation Fee NDO	12,048.00
BT Benbow Club Hall Hire (inc. VAT)	48.00
BT Handy Person Service Wages (Nov)	224.00
BT ELAN Fire & Security CCTV Digital & VCR Replacement	1268.16
(710) Amazon Toner x 4(Yellow/Magenta/Cyan/Black	137.83
(712) Plants for Planter WD Smith & Manor Garden Centre	103.29
(713) Triton Media – Copy Paper x 5 Reams	31.99
(714) Ernest Does – Supplies/Parts	28.18
(715) Clerks Net Salary (Nov)Tel/BB/Office Use + BP (NJC)	<u>1190.20</u>
	17, 666.51
Income: EALC Mini – Grant for CCTV VCR Box	420.00

(ii) To consider and agree the setting of the Precept for 2022- 2023 amount:

The Responsible Finance Officer submitted a budget forecast and Precept Report (Attached) to Councillors. The purpose of the report was to advise Councillors and seek their approval to set the Precept amount for the financial year 2023/2024. The report identified that rising costs and the possibility of stiffer funding opportunities from external grants for Parish Council projects would place a heavier burden on Parish Council finances unless the Precept was increased substantially. Following a discussion Councillors accepted that to keep pace with increasing costs there was a need to increase the Precept. Following a discussion Councillors decided to accept the advice given but to set a slightly lower Precept than recommended.

It was **AGREED** to increase the Precept amount for 2023/2024 from £19,073.19 to £21,966.59 budget equating to an increase of 14.4% and providing an additional amount, over the Precept of 2022/2023 of £2893.40 . Based on 2020/2023 figures in monetary terms it meant an annual increase of the following amounts:

- (i) Band A – E between £2.52 – £4.62 per annum**
(ii) Band F – Band H between £5.46 – £ 7.56 per annum

	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
2023/24	20.34	23.73	27.12	30.51	37.29	44.07	50.85	61.02
2022/23	17.82	20.79	23.76	26.73	32.67	38.61	44.55	53.46
Increase	2.52	2.94	3.39	3.78	4.62	5.46	6.30	7.56

Councillors were all in **AGREEMENT** with the proposed increase in Precept.

(iii) **Funding for Handy Person Service:** Unfortunately, as stated in the Clerks Report, the Parish Council had been unsuccessful in their application for additional funding to continue with their Handy Person Service and as a result a difficult decision had to be made to either (i) continue with the service without financial support or (ii) discontinue the service.

It was decided the Parish Council sadly could not continue with the service without sufficient ongoing funding. **Action:** To advise the Handy Person of the decision and to provide him with a termination letter. However, based on the experience gained as a result of the project the Parish Council would look to obtain capital funding to employ a Grounds Maintenance Operative to deal with over grown areas not covered by other contracts.

77/22 Planning - Councillors to comment on Planning Application/s received under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended):

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 22/01599/FULL

Single storey rear extension – Kismarja, Windsor Road Bowers Gifford Basildon

Due to the timescales Councillors had already sent their comments to Basildon Council Planning.

It was considered that, at the time of the previous planning application, it exceeded the footprint of the original dwelling.

The single storey rear extension will have used up all the allowance permitted within the Green Belt and there are no exceptional circumstances that would warrant exceeding this allowance.

However, taking the previous comments into account, the Parish Council considered the proposed extension to be acceptable and raised no objections in respect of this Application.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO: 22/01706/LDCE

To establish the lawfulness of the occupation of an existing building as a residential annex – Dora Cottage, Cornwall Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon

Councillors concur, from the information available to them, with the applicant's submission letter and that the dwelling was built as a gym over ten years ago. It is believed that soon after it was built as a gym it became continuously used as C3 residential accommodation without interruption. Councillors considered the use of the dwelling for a family member to be acceptable, but the Parish Council felt the grant of a Lawful Development Certificate (LDC) should not be given in as much that Dora Cottage could then essentially be viewed as a separate property to the main dwelling house. However, if the application were deemed to be accepted and granted, it is considered that by virtue of the LDC, the two properties are viewed as one and a condition included in the grant of application preventing

the two properties being sold as separate units in the future.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO:
22/01556/FULL**

Conversion of existing bungalow to form Chalet style dwelling with side dormers.
- 62 Pound Lane Bowers Gifford Basildon Essex

This original application (22/01206/FULL) had been revised following the refusal by Basildon Council to grant the previous application. The Parish Council raised no objections to this new application and its amendments.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 - APPLICATION NO:
22/01375/FULL**

Ground floor extension, the raising the existing roof, and construction of a rear dormer - The Gables, Clarence Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex SS13 2JW

The Applicant had submitted a revised application due to the original application (22/00971/FULL) being refused by Basildon Council. The Parish Council had raised objections to the original application but having considered the amendments in the revised application raised no further objections.

78/22 Planning updates: To receive updates on Planning Applications discussed at previous meetings and other planning information.

Planning Application 22/01473/LDCE: To establish the lawfulness of the occupation of a workshop as a residential dwelling for more than 10 years - Badgers Lodge Grange Road Bowers Gifford Basildon Essex - Refused

Planning Application 22/01380/LDCE: To establish the lawfulness of existing annexe to the rear of, and ancillary to, the main dwelling - Rosendale Elm Road Bowers Gifford Basildon Essex SS13 2LY - Granted

Planning Application 22/01389/TEL: Proposed 5G telecoms installation: H3G 20m street pole and additional equipment cabinets - Land At Junction Of Cat Tree Lane And Pound Lane North Benfleet Basildon Essex- Prior Approval Approved

Planning Application 22/01374/FULL: Single storey rear extension
6 Ilfracombe Avenue, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex SS13 2DS - Granted.

Planning Application 22/01325/FULL: Single storey front extension –
6 Ilfracombe Avenue, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex SS13 2DS - Granted.

Planning Application 22/01302/FULL: Two storey side extension incorporating a garage and a rear bonnet dormer - 10 Alpha Close, Bowers Gifford, Basildon, Essex SS13 2HZ – Granted

Planning Application 22/00301/CON : Application for approval of details reserved by condition 6 (time scales) of appeal decision APP/V1505/C/18/3200138 (Section 74 appeal), condition 1 (hardstanding removal) of appeal APP/V1505/C/18/3200139 (Section 74 appeal), and condition 6 (time scales) of appeal decision APP/V1505/W/18/3200137 (Section 78 appeal) planning reference 17/01752/FULL - Land Adjacent To Church Road, Bowers Gifford, Basildon Essex – Granted

Planning Application 22/00848/FULL : Mascot ,Windsor, Road Bowers Gifford, Basildon Essex SS13 2LH - Construction of 2no single-storey dwellings – Refused.

79/22 Neighbourhood Development Order Feasibility Study update: To provide a brief update on progress.

The Parish Council is currently waiting for feedback from its appointed consultants on various reports being prepared in connection with the NDO Feasibility Study. It is anticipated more information will be available in January.

80/22 Annual Parish Council Event 2022: To agree the date to celebrate the Coronation Event in May 2023

The Council discussed holding an event on the May Bank Holiday weekend to celebrate the King's Coronation and couple it with the Annual Parish Council Event.

The Parish Council **AGREED** to hold their Annual Event for 2023/2024 on Monday 8th May (the Bank Holiday weekend) and the Coronation weekend. It was hoped that funding for the event could be secured from external sources.

81/22 Community Speed Watch: To discuss restarting the Community Speed Watch Project in Spring 2023

Councillors **AGREED** to resume the Community Speed Watch Project providing sufficient volunteers were recruited. An article had been included in the Winter Bowers Bugle newsletter asking for volunteers.

82/22 Date of Next meeting: The date of the next Parish Council Meeting

The date of the next Parish Council meeting was confirmed as 25th January 2023 at the Benbow Club, 77 Pound Lane, Bowers Gifford, commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Signed..... Councillor Bernard Foster, Chair

Date: 25th January 2023